

REPORT OF BRENTWOOD TOWN MEETING

MARCH 12, 2022

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Town of Brentwood in the County of Rockingham, State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in Town Affairs, held at Swasey Central School on Saturday March 12, 2022 at 9:00am the following business was conducted:

Moderator Richard Chamberlain opened the meeting at 9:01am and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There are 3112 registered voters in Brentwood, of which, 197 registered voters (6%) attended Town Meeting.

The Town Report was dedicated to Kenneth Christiansen who retired from his position as a long time Select board member. Ken received a gift and standing ovation.

Michelle Siudut presented Melissa Litchfield with flowers and thanked her for her service with the Budget Committee

The Moderator read the results of Tuesday's election and all who were elected came to the front and were sworn in by Town Clerk Daphne Woss.

Bruce Stevens presented Kevin Johnston with a gift and thanked him for his 16 years of service with the Planning Board.

A motion was made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to use the Moderator's Rules for the meeting. Motion passed by voice vote.

Moderator Richard Chamberlain introduced the Selectmen, Supervisors of the Checklist, Town Clerk, Assistant Moderator, Police Chief, Fire Chief, State Representative, Library Director, Road Agent, Legal Counsel, Town Administrator, and the Budget Committee Chair, who then introduced the Budget Committee members.

A motion was made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to waive the reading of the warrant. Motion passed by voice vote.

Motion made by Lois DeYoung, who provided a signed list of 5 registered voters, to move Article #12 and Article #13, after Article #2.

Article #1. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate three million dollars (\$3,000,000)(gross budget) for purchasing land or other interests therein for conservation; three million dollars of such sum to be raised through bonds or notes in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended); to authorize the Selectboard to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and the other terms thereof, and to take any other action they deem appropriate to effectuate the sale and/or issuance of said bonds or notes, subject, however, to the following provisions:

- no such bonds shall be issued with a term of maturity less than 15 years;
- such bonding authority shall expire at conclusion of the fiscal year 2027;
- purpose of Warrant Article is to conserve parcels determined by the Conservation Commission to be of strategic conservation interest to protect wildlife habitat and water resources while helping to maintain the town's rural character;
- where practicable such land would be made available for use of the citizens of town for recreation (i.e., hiking, biking, running, hunting, fishing, etc.) within the laws of New Hampshire. Use restrictions may be imposed by town, however, after purchase, to comply with future grants, easements and/or sale of property rights to permanently ease for conservation and to offset the cost to Town, as long as such restrictions comply with the spirit of purpose, and at the discretion of the Selectboard; and
- land or property interests to be purchased with bond proceeds shall be acquired in the name of the town by the Conservation Commission, subject to the approval of the Selectboard, pursuant to RSA 36-A:4.

Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. Bond articles must be voted on by ballot vote and pass by 3/5 vote. **Article #1 passed by ballot vote.** YES 173 NO 10. Motion made by Robert Mantegari and duly seconded by Kenneth Christiansen to restrict reconsideration of Article #1. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #2. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Million, Nine Hundred TwentySix Thousand, Four Hundred Forty-Nine Dollars (\$4,926,449) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #2 passed by voice vote.** Motion made

by Robert Mantegari and duly seconded by Kenneth Christiansen to restrict reconsideration of Article #2. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Motion made by Lois DeYoung, who provided a signed list of at least 5 registered voters, to vote on Article #12 by ballot vote.

Article #12. Motion made Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eleven Thousand, Seven Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$11,781) for the purpose of printing, postage, and distribution costs for 8 issues of the Brentwood Newsletter. (Majority vote required).

Michelle Siudut, Brentwood Newsletter Secretary, read a letter to be included with the minutes. The letter has been attached and is on file at the town office.

An amendment was made by Kate Bonafede and duly seconded by Susie Curtis to change the language of Article #12 to read "to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eleven Thousand, Seven Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$11,781) for the purpose of printing, postage, and distribution costs for 8 issues of *a Brentwood newsletter, once a contract has been established*". Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate on amendment. Motion to close debate on amendment passed by voice vote.

Article #12, as amended, failed by hand count. NO 72 YES 68. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate on Article #12, as written. Motion made to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #12 passed by ballot vote.** YES 105 NO 61. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Lois DeYoung to restrict reconsideration of Article #12. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #13. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to discuss "Does the Town want to vote to continue to fund the Brentwood Newsletter in the operating budget or by warrant article annually?" Motion made by Robert Mantegari and duly seconded by Kenneth Christiansen to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. Continuing to fund the Brentwood Newsletter in the **operating budget passed by voice vote.**

Article #3. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Dollars (\$17,000) to be added to the existing Solar Array Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #3 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #3. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #4. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the existing Information Systems Hardware Capital Reserve Fund.

(Majority vote required).

An amendment was made by Elizabeth Faria to change the amount to raise and appropriate from \$25,000 to \$20,000. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate on Article #4, as amended. Motion to close debate on Article #4, as amended, passed by voice vote. **Article #4, as amended, failed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate on Article #4, as written. Motion to close debate on Article #4, as written, passed by voice vote. **Article #4 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #4. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #5. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the existing Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund to meet our constitutional and statutory requirement that assessments are at full and true value at least as often as every fifth year. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #5 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #5. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #6. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the existing Maintenance of Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #6 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #6. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Motion made by Lois DeYoung, who provided a signed list of at least 5 registered voters, to vote on Article #7 by ballot vote.

Article #7. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to establish 2 new full-time firefighter positions effective June 1, 2022 for an estimated annual wage, benefit and other related costs of \$204,364 and further vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$115,210 for wages, benefits and other related costs for the period of June 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. This amount to be offset by funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). No amount to be raised through taxation. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate on Article #7. Motion made to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #7 passed by ballot vote.** YES 126 NO 8. Motion made by Robert Mantegari and duly seconded by Kenneth Christiansen to restrict reconsideration of Article #7. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #8. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the existing Fire/Rescue Vehicles Replacement Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #8 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #8. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #9. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$350,000) for the purpose of public road repair and maintenance. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #9 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #9. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #10. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be added to the existing Highway Vehicles/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #10 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #10. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #11. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the town will vote to establish a Library Amphitheater Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the design, demolition, and construction and to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Library Trustees as agents to expend from said fund. (Majority Vote Required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to allow Janice Weirs, Library Director, to speak, passed by voice vote. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #11 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #11. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.

Article #14. Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari, to see if the town will vote to discontinue the following CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS.

*COSTS OF PLANNING TO EXPAND/BUILD NEW FIRE DEPT: ESTABLISHED 2008

*LIBRARY MAINTENANCE FUND: ESTABLISHED 2003

*RECYCLING REVENUES: ESTABLISHED 1996

Said funds and accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the municipality's general fund. (Majority vote required). Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen

and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to close debate. Motion to close debate passed by voice vote. **Article #14 passed by voice vote.** Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to restrict reconsideration of Article #14. Motion to restrict reconsideration passed by voice vote.


Albert Belanger asked that we adjourn in honor of Thomas Arkell, Jane Byrne, Marilyn Morehead, and Sidney Gove. He would also like the Board of Selectman to send a letter of solidarity to the Ukraine President, and a letter of condemnation to the Russian President.

Robin Wrighton, Brentwood Newsletter Editor, read a letter to be included with the minutes. This letter has been attached and is on file at the town office.

Motion made by Kenneth Christiansen and duly seconded by Robert Mantegari to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Daphne Woss
Town Clerk

County of Rockingham
State of NH

Appeared before me
Joyce Keegal, ~~the~~
Daphne Woss, known to
me.

March 14 2022

Joyce Keegal



I would like to share some facts in regards to the Brentwood Newsletter.

Over the last two years there have been a lot of people criticizing, damning, demeaning and insulting the Brentwood Newsletter and the people involved with it. There were presumptions and opinions and outright lies - without any direct personal conversation with any of the people involved in the Brentwood Newsletter.

In 2020 a WARRANT ARTICLE of demands FAILED. But the integrity of the Brentwood Newsletter team purposed them to meet most of the requests ANYWAY.

That wasn't good enough. There was a demand for a contract. Over the following year, neither the Town Administrator or the Board of Selectmen reached out to Brentwood Newsletter to negotiate a contract. Instead it was an item on the agenda for a board meeting. Contract negotiations do not happen at selectmen's meeting.

Historically, there was a very cordial relationship between the Brentwood Newsletter and the Town. Standard procedure was the town would provide a check to the Brentwood Newsletter the day after town meeting to cover costs for the year.

But not in 2022. The Town decided to change the rules and wanted a monthly invoice. Again, the Brentwood Newsletter complied and requested the first monthly payment. The check for one issue was picked up, and the January issue was produced and sent out. On January 25, an invoice was submitted for February, with a request that the editor be contacted by phone or email when the check was ready. Three weeks later, Ken Christiansen - who has helped fold the newsletter just about every month, emailed the Brentwood Newsletter to ask the date to fold the Feb newsletter. The editor responded, including a copy of the Feb invoice that had been sent 3 weeks prior. The response from Ken was that Karen had mailed a check on 2/2/22. The initial invoice was very clear, asking for a phone call or email when the check was ready. Yet neither of those happened.

It has now been six weeks. Still no phone call. No email. No check. Perhaps we can have an explanation to that - was a check ever mailed? Have other bills paid at the same time gone missing?

I share all of this to show you how the town has treated the VOLUNTEERS at the Brentwood Newsletter. These volunteers who have GIVEN thousands of hours of their time to produce an informative and helpful publication which many in town have come to rely on. Remember that PRODUCTION has never cost the town anything. The town has only paid for a portion of printing and mailing costs.

The treatment by this town and its supposed leadership, is shameful and completely lacking in professionalism. What's truly sad is that you don't even realize what you have broken. Not just a wonderful publication and historical capture of our town - but the spirit of volunteerism. I hope no other volunteer or group of volunteers has to experience what our neighbors at the Brentwood Newsletter have gone through. And I pray this experience is not a sign of the Brentwood to come.

Michelle Siudut
Brentwood Newsletter Secretary

**Written and read into the record of Town Meeting, March 12, 2022,
by Robin Wrighton, Editor, Brentwood Newsletter.**

The Brentwood Newsletter is a volunteer organization established in 1977 and for 45 years has provided a vital platform for free expression to all residents. Anyone who has perused the archives will realize it's true value lies in the recording of history. It is the very essence of the 1st Amendment right to freedom of speech and of the press. Dig in a little and a reader will see that no year is without controversy, nor opposing viewpoints. In 45 years, despite opposing views, the Newsletter remained a forum of civility.

Five years ago, I stepped up and volunteered to fill the editor role held by Linda Rousseau for 40 years. There is so much effort not seen in order to produce a timely, informational newsletter, and at least four tried before me, but not one lasted more than a year. I acknowledge their effort and truly understand the burden on their schedules and their lives, because I average between 40-90 hours each month – all done as a volunteer.

I would like to acknowledge and thank ALL the volunteers over many years for their contributions through thousands of volunteer hours each year. For example, in 2021 at least 128 unique Brentwood neighbors volunteered over 1400 hours, all free to the town of Brentwood. Through the decades, this level of volunteerism has been sustained; the Newsletter owes its existence to these citizens. This is what makes the Brentwood Newsletter the treasure it is. THANK YOU.

Sadly, recent events have changed our course. For more than a year, I have been harassed, bullied, and threatened. I've been called a fascist in the library parking lot. I've had profanity yelled out at me from a passing car. I've been ridiculed on the pages of the Newsletter and regional newspapers by people now in leadership roles in our own town. All without even the briefest conversation or inquiry into how we operate. These people have acted in ignorance and their actions highlight a rapid decline in civility.

Brentwood is a microcosm of our nation. There is no question that this type of intolerance is the cornerstone of tyranny; it will erode our freedoms and liberties if we allow it to continue. History teaches us that tyranny often starts with censorship.

I pray that the citizens of Brentwood will recognize what is good and realize, "the things which are most important don't always scream the loudest." ¹

¹ Robert James Lee Hawke, Australian prime minister, 1983-1991.